



# News Release

Public Affairs Office  
PO Box 1306  
Albuquerque, NM 87103  
505/248-6911  
505/248-6915 (Fax)

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**Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas)**

**Havasu National Wildlife Refuge Needles, California**

<http://southwest.fws.gov>

**For Release: February 21, 2006**

**Contacts: Victoria Fox - 505-248-6455 - Refuge Headquarters - 928-326-3853**

## **PRESCRIBED BURN DATES SET FOR HAVASU NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Havasu National Wildlife Refuge will be conducting a prescribed fire beginning the week of February 28 concluding on March 3, 2006 – conditions permitting. The Refuge is continuing a proactive land management approach by using fire as a tool in treating approximately 45 acres to reduce the future possibility of wildfires while enhancing critical wildlife habitat.

An approved prescribed burn plan, conducive weather conditions, adequate firefighting resources all work together to prevent loss from wildfires. Fire is an effective habitat management tool. Firefighters from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management will be assisting local refuge fire management personnel during this operation.

Prescribed burning reduces the total amount of vegetation and mimics the natural disturbance events that once occurred along the Colorado River. Refuge biologists work closely with Refuge fire personnel to develop a plan that benefits wildlife and promotes the habitat needs of endangered species. Prescribed burning treatments, while expensive, may cost as little as one tenth that of a large scale, wildfire suppression effort. All burn plans are developed using national standards designed by qualified and experienced fire management professionals and are approved by the Refuge manager prior to ignition.

Fire Management personnel at Havasu National Wildlife Refuge will closely monitor weather and fuel conditions to maximize results and minimize smoke impacts on adjacent communities. Burns will only be conducted during the daytime hours. Interstate 40, Golden Shores, Needles, CA, and Mohave Valley may be impacted by smoke for short periods of time. Smoke may also be visible to residents in Bullhead City and the surrounding areas.

More information may be obtained by calling the Refuge at 760-326-3853 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

Visit the Service's website at <http://www.fws.gov>